



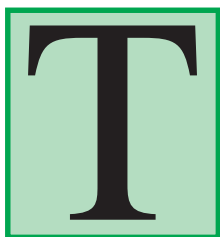
STARTing Line



Volume VII, Issue 1, First Quarter 2004

News about START, Louisiana's tax-advantaged 529 college savings program

START seminars wrap up annual statewide tour of ten major cities



The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)—the state agency that administers the Student Tuition Assistance and Revenue Trust (START) Saving Program, Louisiana's 529 college savings plan—sponsored a series of START seminars during the month of March at a variety of wide-ranging locations across the state.

The ten START seminars, presented at branch libraries in locations representing all regions of the state, were held in the following cities: Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Covington, Hammond, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Monroe, New Orleans, Shreveport and Thibodaux.

The annual spring seminars are designed to raise awareness and understanding among parents, family members and others interested in establishing a higher education savings account for their college-bound student.

Presentations by representatives from LOSFA's Public Information and Communications (PIC) Division lasted one hour and audience members were encouraged to participate in a question and answer period at the end of each session.

Topics covered during the presentations included: How to open a START account, a discussion of the new equities options available to account owners, the

unveiling of the new START Web site and an explanation of the Louisiana College Payment Plan, of which START is a major component, in conjunction with other types of financial aid.

"This year's attendees were especially interested in learning more about START's new equity investment options," PIC Communications Manager Michelle Darling said.

For more information, or to schedule a START presentation for your business or organization, please call the START office at (225) 922-0523.



Public Information and Communications (PIC) Manager Michelle Darling, left, and PIC Representative Roshonda Hanible at the Baton Rouge START seminar held March 10 at Goodwood Public Library.

Must enter to win — "Name the START mascot" contest



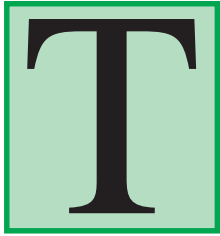
Our newest addition has popped out of the box — START's very own "piggy bank" mascot.

The mascot will accompany LOSFA's public information and communications representatives to START information sessions across the state — but it needs a name.

Win the "Name the START mascot" contest and receive a piggy bank full of prizes!

Mail entry by June 1 to: LOSFA, Name the START mascot contest, P.O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA, 70821-9202 or email newsline@osfa.state.la.us.

START mascot unveiled at N.O. venue



he Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance's (LOSFA) "START" mascot made its first public appearance at the Money Watch Live Conference, held March 13 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

Also on hand were Public Information and Communications (PIC) representatives, who distributed information on the START Saving Program during the more than 35 Money Watch Live sessions conducted by nationally recognized mutual fund experts, consumer advocates, portfolio managers and financial planners.

Money Watch Live, sponsored by the Times-Picayune newspaper and now in its 13th year, is designed to educate the novice investor while enhancing the skills of the seasoned investor. This year's program included sessions on juggling retirement and college savings needs.



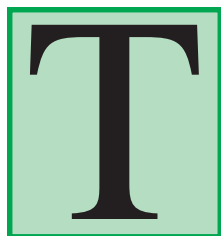
PIC Representative Rhonda Bridevaux, dressed as the START mascot, invites participants to browse the START information booth at the Money Watch Live convention held in New Orleans March 13. For more information about the START Saving Program, or to book a presentation and visit from the START mascot for your business or organization, please call toll-free (800) 259-5626, Ext. 1012.

START NOTES... from the desk of Director Carol Fulco



- As of Feb. 29, 2004, \$37,332,457.27 was on deposit in START Option 2 (Louisiana Principal Protection) and \$1,916,610.88 has been invested with Vanguard Inc. through START's other options.
- As of Feb. 29, \$860,814.19 had been allocated in earnings enhancements and interest and posted to accounts as of Jan. 1, 2004.
- At its Feb. 7 meeting, the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority (LATTA) approved the interest rates on deposits and earnings enhancements for 2003 (see chart on page 3).
- As of Feb. 1, 2004, there were 403 START account owners using BabyMint and 536 BabyMint members who had opened START accounts. A total of \$17,857.37 had been earned in BabyMint rebates by participating START account owners since the establishment of the START/BabyMint partnership.

New START Web site offers easy access



The new START Web site, located at www.startsaving.la.gov, has been redesigned to provide account owners with a user-friendly environment, permitting them to meet many of their START information-processing needs.

The home page provides five menu options: About START, Enroll Now, My Account, Forms and OSFA Home.

The “About START” tab provides a program overview, an owner’s agreement, explains investment options and offers copies of STARTing Line.

The “Enroll Now” tab offers both online applications and paper applications for downloading.

The “My Account” tab allows owners to create their personal login to the site.

The “Forms” tab provides online forms and forms available for downloading, ranging from new applications to changing investment options.

Finally, the “OSFA Home” tab takes the user to the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance Web site home page.

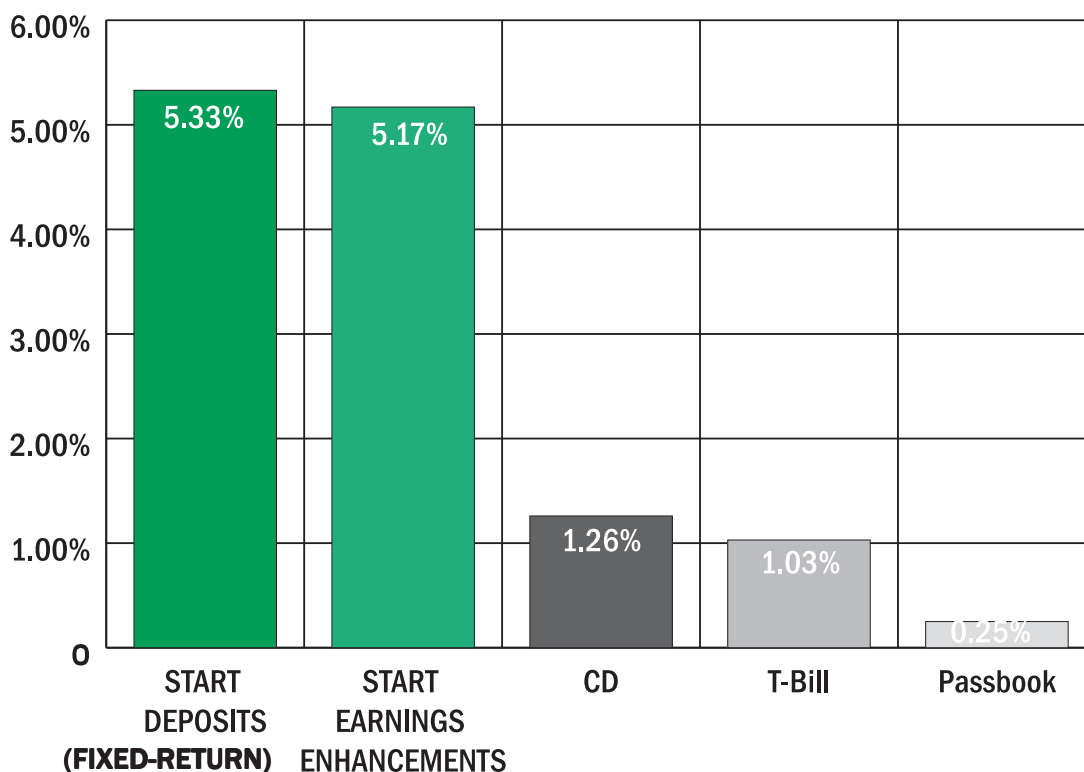
Looking toward the future, Director Carol Fulco said that by autumn, account owners should be able to request disburse-

ments online, bypassing the need to mail paperwork to the START office.

When requesting disbursements online, users will be asked to indicate if they prefer the money be sent to the account owner, the beneficiary or directly to the school.

Other forthcoming enhancements to the site include a directory for contacting START and enabling change of address and payroll deduction authorizations to be performed online.

“The new Web site is currently a work-in-progress with new functionality being continually added until all START functions are processed online,” Fulco said.



This chart compares the interest rate earned on START fixed-return deposits and earnings enhancements to certificates of deposit, treasury bills and passbook savings accounts during 2003. It does not show the total earnings rate achieved when the interest rate and the earnings enhancement rates are combined.

NOTICE TO ACCOUNT OWNERS:

Please use your new account number, which replaces your Social Security Number, on all payments and correspondence concerning your START account. Your Social Security Number is no longer your START account number.

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To speak to a representative
(800) 259-5626



Visit START online:
www.osfa.state.la.us

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